

Deuteronomy 31:6 *Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”*

Officer Arnulfo Crispin badge #267 exemplifies that courage, strength and will forever be with our GOD from which it is derived.

It is with great sadness that, as the police chief for the Lakeland Police Department, I must call the end of watch of Officer Arnulfo Crispin, December 21, 2011. Officer Crispin began with the Lakeland Police Department on June 06, 2010. The Lakeland Police Department was strengthened by Officer Crispin from his very first day on the job. He brought an enthusiasm and energy that was contagious. He was well respected by his peers and praised by those he worked with for his passion and energy. As I talked with those he worked closely with on Charlie Squad over the last week, it was clear that he was a favored member of the squad and was quickly becoming a respected shift leader. And, they all said that he always had a smile on his face. He was known to be dedicated to solving problems in his zone and helping other officers in their zones as well.

While his time with LPD has been cut too short, he made a big impact from the beginning. As stated by one of his field training officers, Carlos Cortes... Officer Crispin shows an outstanding demeanor towards his job and is very respectful towards citizens and co-workers. Officer Crispin is a pro-active officer and is also a good asset to this department.

Over this last week, I have been approached by several in the community that Officer Crispin touched or somehow helped. Each person described Arnie Crispin as a caring officer willing to go out of his way to help. They also described him as a “no-nonsense” officer when it came to solving problems and putting “bad guys in jail”.

From all of the people I have talked to, it is very clear to me that Officer Arnie Crispin exemplified the highest level of professionalism. He represented the Lakeland Police and the Lakeland community with pride. He was what we should all strive to be!

Many have said that Arnulfo Crispin wanted to be a police officer for a very long time. As Chief, I am very proud that he chose to be a Lakeland Police Officer. The following are his own words as to why he should be with the LPD:

“I am the best qualified candidate due to the passion I have for the profession of law enforcement. I will bring several assets to the Lakeland Police Department, including bilingual Spanish, and an A.S. Degree in Criminal Justice Technology. I am physically fit in every aspect, and I have a determination for this profession. I am an excellent team player. I am willing to work under cover within a few years, if hired, and look for other opportunities within the department. I want to help the City of Lakeland and the civilians that are in need of help and deter crime.”

I am proud to say that, although his time with us was too short, he lived up to every single word he wrote.

As we know from John 15:13

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Officer Arnulfo Crispin dedicated his life to serving and protecting others. And by his tragic death, he demonstrated the greatest love that one man can show. He committed himself to the Lakeland Police Department and all of the citizens we serve. And in his death, he shall be remembered forever for his commitment, energy, professionalism, and bravery.

To each police officer here today, I speak directly to you. While we may never understand the senseless violence that took the life of Arnie Crispin, we must all strive to ensure this his death is not in vain. We must all continue to serve and protect our communities with the same dedication, professionalism and commitment that he showed each and every day. To the Lakeland Police Officers, although we grieve we must ensure that we remain strong and united. That is the greatest honor we can bestow upon Officer Cripsin. We owe this to him and to his family.

On behalf of the Lakeland Police Department, I offer the Crispin family my heartfelt sympathy and condolences. We will keep you all forever in our prayers.

Mr. and Mrs. Crispin. My heart breaks for you. May the grace of God be with you.

The Policeman's Prayer

*When I start my tour of duty God,
Wherever crime may be;
As I walk the darkened streets alone,
Let me be close to thee.*

*Please give me understanding,
With both the young and old;
Let me listen with attention
Until their story's told.*

*Let me never make a judgement
In a rash or callous way;
Let me hold my patience,
Let each man have his say.*

*Lord, if some dark and dreary night,
I must give up my life,
Protect with understanding love,
My family, my children, my wife.*

Author unknown